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State of Minnesota  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-EIGHTH SESSION

H. F. No. 371

02/06/2013 Authored by Newton, Dettmer, Dill, Daudt, Lesch and others  
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance and Veterans Affairs

1.1 A bill for an act  
1.2 relating to veterans; modifying the veterans service office grant program;  
1.3 appropriating money; amending Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 197.608,  
1.4 subdivisions 3, 4, 5, 6; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 197.608,  
1.5 subdivision 2a.

1.6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 197.608, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

1.8 Subd. 3. **Eligibility.** (a) To be eligible for a grant under ~~this program~~ subdivision 6,  
1.9 a county must employ a county veterans service officer as authorized by sections 197.60  
1.10 and 197.606, who is certified to serve in this position by the commissioner.

1.11 (b) A county that employs a newly hired county veterans service officer who is  
1.12 serving an initial probationary period and who has not been certified by the commissioner  
1.13 is eligible to receive a grant under subdivision ~~2a~~ 6 for one year from the date the county  
1.14 veterans service officer is appointed.

1.15 (c) ~~Except for the situation described in paragraph (b),~~ A county whose county  
1.16 veterans service officer does not receive certification ~~during any year of the three-year~~  
1.17 ~~cycle is not eligible to receive a grant during the remainder of that cycle or the next~~  
1.18 three-year cycle by the end of the first year of the county veterans service officer's  
1.19 appointment is ineligible for the grant under subdivision 6 until the county veterans  
1.20 service officer receives certification.

1.21 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 197.608, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

1.22 Subd. 4. **Grant process.** (a) The commissioner shall determine the process for  
1.23 awarding grants. A grant may be used only for the purpose of enhancing the operations of  
1.24 the County Veterans Service Office.

2.1 (b) The commissioner shall provide a list of qualifying uses for grant expenditures  
 2.2 as developed in subdivision 5 and shall approve a grant under subdivision 6 only for a  
 2.3 qualifying use and if there are sufficient funds remaining in the grant program to cover the  
 2.4 full amount of the grant.

2.5 (c) The commissioner is authorized to use any unexpended funding for this program  
 2.6 to provide training and education for county veterans service officers.

2.7 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 197.608, subdivision 5, is amended to read:

2.8 Subd. 5. **Qualifying uses.** The commissioner shall consult with the Minnesota  
 2.9 Association of County Veterans Service Officers in developing a list of qualifying uses for  
 2.10 grants awarded under ~~this program~~ subdivision 6.

2.11 ~~The commissioner is authorized to use any unexpended funding for this program to~~  
 2.12 ~~provide training and education for county veterans service officers.~~

2.13 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 197.608, subdivision 6, is amended to read:

2.14 Subd. 6. **Grant amount.** (a) Each county is eligible to receive an annual grant of  
 2.15 \$7,500 for the following purposes:

2.16 (1) to provide outreach to the county's veterans;

2.17 (2) to assist in the reintegration of combat veterans into society;

2.18 (3) to collaborate with other social service agencies, educational institutions, and  
 2.19 other community organizations for the purposes of enhancing services offered to veterans;

2.20 (4) to reduce homelessness among veterans; and

2.21 (5) to enhance the operations of the county veterans service office.

2.22 (b) In addition to the grant amount in paragraph (a), each county is eligible to receive  
 2.23 an additional annual grant under this paragraph. The amount of each additional annual  
 2.24 grant must be determined by the commissioner and may not exceed:

2.25 (1) ~~\$1,400~~ \$0, if the county's veteran population is less than 1,000;

2.26 (2) ~~\$2,800~~ \$2,500, if the county's veteran population is 1,000 or more but less than  
 2.27 3,000;

2.28 (3) ~~\$4,200~~ \$5,000, if the county's veteran population is 3,000 or more but less ~~then~~  
 2.29 ~~10,000~~ than 4,999; ~~or~~

2.30 (4) ~~\$5,600~~ \$7,500, if the county's veteran population is ~~10,000~~ 5,000 or more: but  
 2.31 less than 9,999;

2.32 (5) \$10,000, if the county's veteran population is 10,000 or more but less than 19,999;

2.33 (6) \$15,000, if the county's veteran population is 20,000 or more but less than  
 2.34 29,999; or

3.1 (7) \$20,000, if the county's veteran population is 30,000 or more.

3.2 (c) The Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers is eligible to  
3.3 receive an annual grant of \$50,000. The grant shall be used for administrative costs of  
3.4 the association, certification of mandated county veterans service officer training and  
3.5 accreditation, and costs associated with reintegration services.

3.6 The veteran population of each county shall be determined by the figure supplied by  
3.7 the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, as adopted by the commissioner.

3.8 **Sec. 5. VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE; APPROPRIATION.**

3.9 \$1,005,000 is appropriated in fiscal years 2014 and 2015 from the general fund to  
3.10 the commissioner of veterans affairs for the additional grants authorized by section 4. This  
3.11 amount is added to the agency's base budget.

3.12 **Sec. 6. REPEALER.**

3.13 Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 197.608, subdivision 2a, is repealed.

APPENDIX  
Repealed Minnesota Statutes: 13-1131

**197.608 VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE GRANT PROGRAM.**

Subd. 2a. **Grant cycle.** Counties may become eligible to receive grants on a three-year rotating basis according to a schedule to be developed and announced in advance by the commissioner. The schedule must list no more than one-third of the counties in each year of the three-year cycle. A county may be considered for a grant only in the year of its listing in the schedule.